

Message Text

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SUBJ: APRIL'S STUDY AND CRITICISM AGAIN CRITICIZES IMPORTS

REF: HK 4569 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY: APRIL'S STUDY AND CRITICISM CONTAINS A NUMBER OF ARTICLES WHICH CONTINUE THE SHANGHAI JOURNAL'S CRITICISM OF OVER-RELIANCE ON FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST IS ONE ARTICLE WHICH DESCRIBES HOW WORKERS IN A SHANGHAI PLANT OVERRULED MANAGEMENT'S DECISION TO RELY ON IMPORTS BY APPEALING TO A HIGHER PARTY AUTHORITY. NCNA'S LATER USE OF THIS ARTICLE PROVIDES ANOTHER INDICATION OF CENTRAL APPROVAL OF THIS THEME AND THE LEADING ROLE PLAYED BY THE JOURNAL AND SHANGHAI IN PUSHING IT. END SUMMARY.

1. APRIL'S STUDY AND CRITICISM CONTAINS A NUMBER OF ARTICLES WHICH CONTINUE THE SHANGHAI JOURNAL'S CRITICISM OF OVER-RELIANCE ON FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY. THESE ARTICLES
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PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS INTO OPPOSING ARGUMENTS IN

THE PRC'S CURRENT DEBATE OVER THE PROPER ROLE FOR IMPORTS IN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION. THEY ALSO GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THIS QUESTION WAS RESOLVED IN ONE CASE AT THE FACTORY LEVEL.

2. IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED, "NOTES ON GOING DOWN TO THE FACTORY; RESPECT THE INNOVATIVE SPIRIT OF THE MASSES," THE AUTHOR DESCRIBES THE CASE OF THE SHANGHAI MOTOR TRANSPORT COMPANY'S RESPONSE TO A NEED FOR LARGE PLATFORM TRAILERS TO MOVE HEAVY EQUIPMENT. A SHORTER VERSION OF THE ARTICLE (WITH DIFFERENT TITLE) WAS CARRIED BY NCNA MAY 9 WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION. THE JOURNAL'S VERSION IS HANDLED AS A FIRST PERSON ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTORY'S EXPERIENCE. NCNA'S ARTICLE IS A STRAIGHT NEWS REPORT.

3. IN BOTH ACCOUNTS, THE FACTORY'S DECISION TO BUILD THE TRAILERS WAS REACHED ONLY AFTER A STRUGGLE BETWEEN THOSE WHO WANTED TO IMPORT THE VEHICLES AND WORKERS WHO WANTED TO PRODUCE THE EQUIPMENT THEMSELVES. AT A "THREE-IN-ONE" MEETING CALLED TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE, THE JOURNAL STATES THAT "TECHNICAL PERSONNEL" ARGUED THAT THE PROJECT WAS BEYOND THE PLANT'S CAPACITY AND URGED THAT THE VEHICLES BE IMPORTED. THEY FELT IT WAS ALSO FASTER TO BUY THE VEHICLES THAN BUILD THEM. THE WORKERS DISAGREED, HOWEVER, NOTING THE PLANT HAD BUILT LARGE TRAILERS IN THE PAST. THEY ALSO POINTED OUT THAT IMPORTING WAS ACTUALLY SLOWER SINCE IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN 18 MONTHS FOR PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF FOREIGN VEHICLES.

4. ON THE ROLE OF PLANT OFFICIALS AND THE PARTY, HOWEVER, THE TWO ACCOUNTS DIFFER. THE JOURNAL STATES ONLY THAT "SOME COMRADES" IN THE RELEVANT LEADERSHIP DEPARTMENT DISREGARDED THE WORKERS AND "WITHHELD SUPPORT." IT DOES NOT SAY HOW THE ISSUE WAS RESOLVED. NCNA'S ACCOUNT, HOWEVER, SUGGESTS THAT OUTSIDE INTERVENTION WAS NEEDED TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE. IT STATES THAT THE "PARTY ORGANIZATION AT A HIGHER LEVEL" SUPPORTED THE WORKERS AND GAVE THE TASK TO THE FACTORY. IN BOTH REPORTS, THE WORKERS ARE THEN CREDITED WITH RAPIDLY PRODUCING THE VEHICLES IN 100 DAYS.

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5. TAKEN TOGETHER THESE ARTICLES PROVIDE AN UNUSUALLY SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE QUESTION OF IMPORTS VERSUS "SELF-RELIANCE" WAS HANDLED AT ONE FACTORY. THE EXAMPLE CHOSEN IS OBVIOUSLY INTENDED AS A GUIDE TO OTHER PRODUCTION UNITS IN DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM. IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE, THE VIEW OF THE FACTORY'S TECHNICIANS AND MANAGERS THAT THE NEEDED EQUIPMENT COULD

BEST BE OBTAINED THROUGH IMPORTS WAS OVERRULED BY THE
WORKERS WHO APPEALED OUTSIDE THE FACTORY TO A HIGHER
AUTHORITY. THAT THIS HIGHER AUTHORITY WAS THE "PARTY
ORGANIZATION" STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE DECISION WAS
BASED ON LARGELY POLITICAL RATHER THAN TECHNICAL CON-
SIDERATION. THE CLEAR INFERENCE IS THAT THE POLITICALLY
CORRECT PATH IS RELIANCE ON WORKERS INNOVATIONS AND THAT
THIS SHOULD BE CHOSEN OVER IMPORTS AS THE PROPER WAY
TO INCREASE OR IMPROVE PRODUCTION. NCNA'S USE OF THE
STORY PROVIDES ONE MORE INDICATION OF--PERHAPS INCREASING--
CENTRAL APPROVAL OF THIS THEME AND OF THE LEADING ROLE
BEING PLAYED BY STUDY AND CRITICISM AND SHANGHAI IN
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